

Teaching guided reading

What should I teach during a strategy check?

The purpose of a 'strategy check' is to give the children an opportunity to practice and remember the different strategies they need to apply in order to read and understand texts. The strategy check follows the book introduction, just before the children read independently.

Over time, you will select different skills to focus on during the strategy check, and may focus on one for a number of sessions. You will decide which reading behaviour/s to teach in a particular session based on:

- The group targets
- The demands of the text. For example, the text may include a number of technical words which need decoding and discussing prior to reading
- Previous sessions. For example, if you notice that the children are not re-reading when they made an error or self-correcting, they could practice this during the strategy check in the next lesson.

When teaching guided reading to children with EAL, it is important to use the pictures to support discussion, in order to aid comprehension. In addition, spend time discussing and defining new and unusual words. Ensure that you model how to use specific strategies and give the children an opportunity to practice the strategies a number of times.

The table below includes a list of possible skills/strategies you could focus on during a 'strategy check' and includes some possible activities which you could use.

Early readers	Fluent readers
<p>Ask children to remember what they need to do when they are reading - demonstrate these strategies.</p> <p>1 to 1 pointing: children practise pointing using a sentence from the story, which is cut-up, in order to emphasise the spaces; OR Children practise using a pointer; OR teacher makes an error and children help to point correctly.; OR children show and use a pointing finger.</p> <p>Predicting: Cover a word - predict what it</p>	<p>Ask children to name the strategies they can use when they are unable to read a word.</p> <p>Ask the children to share the different things they can do when they don't understand a word, sentence or section of text.</p> <p>Inferring meaning of unknown words: list some more challenging words from the guided book on the board. Ask the children to read the words and predict what they mean. Read them the whole sentence so they can check their predictions.</p> <p>Text layout: analyse a page of text (e.g. non-fiction) - how is it organised? Why? How do we read it?</p> <p>Decoding unknown words: record difficult words from the text on cards or the board - ask children to decode</p>

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could be and check; OR model predicting a word - checking all searchlights.

Checking meaning - does that make sense? Explain that reading should always make sense. Practice re-reading to check meaning; OR read a sentence - check that it makes sense; OR give the children two options - which one makes sense? OR Discuss what is happening on the page.

Checking initial/ final sounds - does that look right? Cover the first/last letter - predict then check; OR point to the first letter - get your mouth ready to make the sound; OR find the letter on an alphabet card.

Re-reading to check: explain to the children the importance of going back and checking their reading; model re-reading; practice re-reading.

Applying phonics to read words: list some more challenging words in the text - decode these together using phonics - predict/discuss the meanings

these words and explain how what they did (i.e. syllables; phonics; knowing parts of words etc) - predict the meaning of the words.

Checking meaning: read a sentence from the text which is more challenging - discuss what it means and how they know.

Active reading strategies -

Asking questions while they are reading:

Visualising: read a section of text - ask children to think about what pictures they see in their head

Predicting: read the opening paragraph - summarise what they know so far and predict what might happen next - read the next paragraph to check.

Reading longer sentences (complex sentences) record the main clause from a complex sentence on the board - read it and discuss what it means - explain that authors often add more information to the sentence (subordinate clause) - add the subordinate clause and discuss what it means - add it to the main clause and discuss how the two clauses relate to each other - locate the comma and explain that the clauses are usually split by a comma.

Identifying the main points: read the opening paragraph of the text to the children and ask them to identify the main points - list these on the board and discuss why other information is not key to the story.

Scanning: turn to a page of the text and model how you scan the text for information - use a highlighter

Skimming: model reading a paragraph quickly, looking for specific information (e.g. main characters; clues about setting)